1:Haskins K-4,5 (1952-1954)1956 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

175 the Recôncavo, for they took with them a newly acquired knowledge of
648 sugar cane cultivation.

175 The eighteenth century opened with a series of disasters for
169 the region. When word of gold discoveries in Minas Gerais (1704)
567 reached Bahia, an exodus began.[25] Slaves were sold at exorbitant prices, and often masters and slaves together went off to the mines. The colonial authorities took drastic steps to halt the flight, but
[731] to no avail. The first quarter of the century ended with floods in the Recôncavo and the discovery of diamonds in the interior. There was a second exodus.[26]

175 In the meantime there were momentous developments in the
171 West Indies. Sugar cane cultivation spread rapidly in the Antilles
249 as the Netherlands and other northwestern European states which had been lucrative markets for Brazilian sugar began their own production in their respective West Indian colonies. In addition to the protected markets which the mother countries afforded, these new centers enjoyed sound economic and geographical advantages. As newcomers to the field of sugar production, the Antilles were free of both the antiquated equipment and the backward techniques which burdened Brazil, and they were closer to the major European markets.[27]

175 The Recôncavo was unable to counter these West Indian develop-
178 ments. In a century and a half of commercial development there had
185 been few improvements in agricultural or industrial methods. There
249 was no conservation of the soil. Only one variety of cane was known, and there was no attempt to develop improved strains. The mills continued to burn expensive wood rather than to use bagasse. Antique, low-yielding crushing mills continued to be used for extraction.[28]

175 At the end of the eighteenth century, however, developments
249 abroad restored to the Recôncavo and to Brazil many of the advantages
178 which it had formerly held in the international market. This
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* 249 the responsibility of holders to colonize and develop their areas. The grants were as a rule very large, consisting of leagues of land rather than of acres. Only one grant could be made to a family. As a result the son of a man who was a holder of a grant either had to remain on his father's land or had to leave the province and go elsewhere to acquire land. The only remaining alternative was to forget about land and go into commerce or a profession. However, since the grants were so very large, the original holders were able to break them up, selling or renting parts, giving some to their married sons or daughters and yet retaining and cultivating enough to support themselves. Thus the original land grants were broken up, and several plantations were made of each.

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313 Engenho was the name given to the total plantation, as well as being the specific designation for the mill itself. Every plantation, regardless of whether it was inland or on the coast, needed two things: the soil known as massapê, and woods as close as possible to the mill to supply firewood for boiling the sugar-cane juice. Firewood soon became a crucial problem, one which has haunted the sugar industry for centuries. Conservation never was a Brazilian practice, and the tropical forests of the Recôncavo were soon stripped to feed the hungry mouths of the furnaces. As time went on it became necessary to import firewood by boat from wherever it could be found, which added greatly to the costs of producing sugar. The steam mill came much later and added further to the problem.

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361 At first the owner's house was a veritable fort, surrounded by bulwarks and stockades to resist Indian attacks, but by the end of the seventeenth century the need for this precaution had passed away and the plantation houses were assuming noble proportions. Many were imposing two-story buildings built of stone and mortar, the ground level generally being used as a storehouse and the master (senhor de engenho) and his family living on the upper floor. As a rule the Big House of the Recôncavo was situated so that there would be an excellent view from the windows, not only of the mill and slave quarters nearby but of the surrounding countryside. There was no sight so dear to the heart of a plantation master as that of fields of sugar cane, the leaves of many shades of green waving gently in the breeze.

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[346] Frequently a chapel was connected with the house or built near it. Not very far away would be the mill, and nearby the